

REMARKS

Claims 2, 3, 5, 7-13, 15, and 28 are pending in this application.

Applicants have amended claims 2, 5, 7, 9, 15, and 28, and have canceled claims 1, 4, 6, 14, and 27 (claims 16-26, 29, and 30 were previously canceled). These changes do not introduce any new matter.

Claim Objection

In response to the objection to claim 9, Applicants have amended this claim so that it recites the term “density” instead of the term “pitch.” Accordingly, Applicants request that the objection to claim 9 be withdrawn.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejection of claims 1-5, 7, 8, 10-15, 27, and 28 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Burt et al.* (“*Burt*”) (U.S. Patent No. 6,125,204) (as noted above, claims 1, 4, 14, and 27 have been canceled herein).

Applicants have amended independent claim 2 to include the features of original claims 4 and 6. In light of the changes to claim 2, Applicants have canceled claims 4 and 6. In addition, Applicants have amended each of independent claims 15 and 28 to include the features of original claims 4 and 6.

As recognized by the Examiner in the Office Action, the *Burt* reference does not disclose the features shown in original claim 6. As the features shown in original claim 6 are now recited in each of independent claims 1, 15, and 28, these claims define subject matter that is not shown in the *Burt* reference.

Accordingly, for at least the foregoing reasons, independent claims 2, 15, and 28, as amended herein, are patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over *Burt*. Claims 3, 5, and 7-13, each of which ultimately depends from claim 2, are likewise patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over *Burt* for at least the same reasons set forth above regarding claim 2.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejection of claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Burt* in view of *Katayama et al.* (“*Katayama*”) (U.S. Patent No. 5,982,951). As noted above, Applicants have canceled claim 6 herein, and have incorporated the features of claim 6 into each of independent claims 2, 15, and 28. To the extent that the obviousness rejection of former claim 6 may be considered to apply to the claims 2, 15, and 28, as amended herein, Applicants respond as follows.

Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner’s characterization of the *Burt* reference relative to the subject matter defined in claim 2. The portion of the *Burt* reference relied upon by the Examiner (Figures 2A-2C, column 17, lines 26-37, Figure 5, and items 500, 502, and 508) does not disclose “generating the composite image on a predetermined processing area of the original image...*without performing the process on portions outside the processing area*” (emphasis added).

Further, the portion of the *Katayama* reference relied upon by the Examiner (Abstract, column 2, lines 35-41, column 8, lines 45-49, and column 13, lines 27-33) does not disclose that the “generating of the composite image includes calculating a tone value of each pixel making up the composite image..., *without calculating tone values of pixels not included in the composite image*” (emphasis added). Instead, *Katayama* generates a composite image with respect to an area that includes both original images (see Figure 12 and column 9, lines 24-26).

In view of the foregoing, even if the *Burt* and *Katayama* references were to be combined in the manner proposed by the Examiner (a proposition with which Applicants do not agree), the result of the combination would not have included each and every feature specified in claims 2, 15, and 28, as amended herein. As such, the combination of *Burt* in

view of *Katayama* would not have rendered the subject matter defined in claims 2, 15, and 28 obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art.

Accordingly, claims 2, 15, and 28 are patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over the combination of *Burt* in view of *Katayama*.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejection of claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Burt* in view of *Manickam et al.* (“*Manickam*”) (U.S. Patent No. 6,067,384). Claim 9 ultimately depends from claim 2. As noted above, claim 2 has been amended to include the features of original claim 6, which has been canceled herein. Neither the *Burt* reference nor the *Manickam* reference discloses or suggests the features of original claim 6. As such, for at least this reason, the subject matter defined in claim 9 is patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over the combination of *Burt* in view of *Manickam*.

Furthermore, for at least the same reasons discussed above with respect to claims 2, 15, and 28, the *Katayama* reference does not cure the deficiencies of the *Burt* reference relative to the presently claimed subject matter. Thus, claim 9 is also patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over the combination of *Burt*, *Katayama*, and *Manickam*.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and reexamination of claims 2, 3, 5, 7-13, 15, and 28, as amended herein, and submit that these claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, a notice of allowance is respectfully requested. In the event a telephone conversation would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner may reach the undersigned at (408) 749-6902. If any additional

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fees are due in connection with the filing of this paper, then the Commissioner is authorized to charge such fees to Deposit Account No. 50-0805 (Order No. MIPFP086).

Respectfully submitted,
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